

Comments to
MICROSOFT-WA PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

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Basic features of the UW College of Education:

- All-graduate level institution
- Context: Research-oriented university
- Prepare: Teachers (incl. Special Ed); administrators, school psychologists
- Program features: mostly cohort-based; heavy faculty involvement in teaching; lots of field experience; focus on eliminating equity gaps

Current modeling of 21st c. teaching, learning and assessments

Much of our work – several projects – oriented around notion of a continuum of support for teachers

How we attract them into the profession
How we prepare them when they are with us
How we assure they are mentored appropriately during the first
few years they are at work in schools (overcome attrition)
How we can help them as they proceed to become deeply
reflective and effective educators
(Copies of continuum available)

This continuum is part of the "how" to organize teacher education;
much of the "what" is provided by current research on human
learning (Bransford; new book with Linda Darling *Hammond*
Preparing teachers for a changing world)

How students learn (especially how they come to use
language)
How teachers learn

These 2 not radically different! Learning with supportive groups of peers, mentoring by knowledgeable guides, importance of a relevant context, assessment and feedback; principles articulated in Bransford's book, How people learn)

How teachers can be prepared for changing realities they'll encounter in schools during their professional lives (e.g., 35 years ago: special education, esl and ell issues, student demographics, addressing the achievement gap, use of technology)

Continuum embodied in our current project Teachers for a New Era – funding from Carnegie Corp. – one of 11 such sites in the US

Reengagement with Arts and Sciences faculty
Teaching taught as academically taught clinical practice profession

All based on an empirical base – information about how teachers do with real students in real classrooms
(creating the "evidentiary warrant" for the value of higher-education-based educator preparation)

Current creation of an authentic assessment system (specific at first to education in science) that can be done at scale
(To be offered when done to other institutions that are members of WACTE)
(All activities of the project coordinated through the Washington Center for Teaching and Learning – to open formally in Winter 05)

Particularly interesting part of current work with pre-service teachers is in grant from Ackerley Foundation

Strengthening mentoring through closer connections with urban partner schools, pairing beginning teachers with experienced mentors in first 2 yrs of teaching

Using VideoTraces, a new technology tool for capturing, annotating, and sharing video records of teaching practice (or any practice; developed by our Prof. Reed Stevens –

extensive use already within UW and in other settings in the region, with strong success)

(Enables teachers to develop a language for exchanging information about professional practice, which has been lacking)

Creating an undergraduate pathway into teacher education, including a course on Learning Sciences

(Particularly important – teachers commonly don't come into field with an "assessment mindset" – cf. Richard Elmore comment: "Ts become voracious consumers and producers of information about their work.")

Focus throughout teacher education program on assessment as an intrinsic, interwoven part of teaching- not something separate from it, not an "add-on" after instruction

Current teacher education program uses technology in varied ways, including creation of on-line e-portfolio as final project for program. And: Increasing use of UW's "Catalyst" e-tool set (VirtualCase, E-Post, WebQ, Simple Site, etc.)

Also especially important is preparation of teachers to reduce the achievement gap and work much more effectively with students from diverse backgrounds – current study by Profs. Gene Edgar, Manka Varghese, and post-doc Anita Lenges. A special focus here is on assessment -- how teachers know students are learning

Other programs deal with other aspects of the continuum – for example, over 80 students per year participate in our program leading to national Board certification under the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Also: New MEd program in Teacher Leadership, combining efforts of our faculty in Curriculum & Instruction with those in Ed Leadership and Policy Studies; for those who will work as:

Curriculum development coordinators
Grade- or school-level project leaders

Professional growth study group leader (Critical Friends, Lesson Study, etc.)

What will it take to help us fully implement our vision of becoming a 21st c. College of Education?

Resources that will enable us to do a more comprehensive job in tracking and analyzing data from these efforts (TNE, Ackerley, etc.)

This is complex, time-consuming work, needs careful attention

For ex, tracking grads from programs, and examining effectiveness of mentoring on teachers' success, how able they are to bring about change in student learning, how to tie student learning to standards in ways that make sense

Resources that enable us to develop in new teachers a mindset that welcomes assessment as a critical, natural, central part of the activity of teaching

An undergraduate "Orientation to Teaching" course can assist with this, as can special summer workshops for current teachers and the use of tools like VideoTraces

These are complex, expensive tasks to undertake – we can do some, but to develop models that can be done at scale and that can be exported will take extra support.

Resources to aid in creating technology-based tools (*UW has a good infrastructure and lots of talent, but need resources to access their time, organize their skills*)

In framework of thinking about assessment, need to create tools to allow us to: Collect different types of data (not just numerical test results); allow teachers to share, analyze that data; view the progressive development of student skills and abilities over time;

and display data in ways that are convincing for varied community stakeholders)

Much pressure on teacher education these days, including proposals that suggest it can be done "on the cheap" – that alternative routes are the best way to go

We believe this approach is not the best for the K-12 students of Washington, nor is it supported by the evidence about how people learn or how effective teachers work

Strong, demanding professional programs pay dividends for the state and the state's children over the long run, and will be even more valuable over time if teacher education is treated as a continuum of professional development.